

~~SECRET~~

PAGE 001

AUG 91

(b) (1)  
(b) (3)  
(S)

[REDACTED] THE SECURITY  
SITUATION IN GUATEMALA, [REDACTED] IS DETERIORATING DAILY.  
[REDACTED] AS AN EXAMPLE THE RECENT DISCOVERY OF 11 TRANSPORT  
WORKERS (TRUCK DRIVERS) AND CUSTOMS OFFICIALS WHO HAD BEEN  
ASSASSINATED IN THE ESCUINTLA AREA, SOUTH OF GUATEMALA CITY, ON  
8 AUGUST. [REDACTED]

APPROVED FOR RELEASE  
DATE: SEP 2003



[REDACTED] ALTHOUGH  
THE PRESS WAS ATTRIBUTING THE MURDERS TO SUBVERSIVES, [REDACTED]  
BELIEVED THEY WERE AN ACT OF RETRIBUTION, BECAUSE OF THE  
INVOLVEMENT OF THE VICTIMS IN SMUGGLING OR OTHER FORMS OF  
CORRUPTION. [REDACTED] LIKE SO MANY OF THE RECENT  
VIOLENT ACTS, "IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE THE TRUE DIRECTION  
OF THE VIOLENCE" STATING THAT ON THE SURFACE THEY APPEAR TO BE  
ATTRIBUTABLE TO SECURITY FORCES, BUT, IN FACT, THEY MAY WELL BE  
THE ACTS OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMIST ELEMENTS, OR CRIMINAL GROUPS,  
SUCH AS NARCO TRAFFICKERS FIGHTING FOR CONTROL OF HIGHLY  
LUCRATIVE ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES.

2-035

R 109-1

~~SECRET~~

SLAYING OF GUATEMALA POLICE INSPECTOR JOSE MIGUEL ((~~a~~MERIDA)) ESCOBAR, THE OFFICER IN CHARGE OF INVESTIGATING THE MURDER OF MIRNA MACK, A GUATEMALAN ANTHROPOLOGIST, THE OFFICER REPLIED THAT TO THE BEST OF HIS KNOWLEDGE THE REAL KILLERS HAVE NOT BEEN IDENTIFIED. HE ADDED THERE APPEARS TO BE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO MISDIRECT OR OBSCURE THE INVESTIGATION, AND TALK WITHIN MILITARY CIRCLES IS THAT MERIDA WAS GETTING TOO CLOSE TO IDENTIFYING THE KILLERS OF MACK, AND HE HAD TO BE KILLED. WHEN ASKED IF THIS INDICATED THE KILLING WAS OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED, HE STATED IT APPEARED SO, BUT HE WOULD NOT SPECULATE AS TO WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE.



R19-2

~~SECRET~~

END OF MESSAGE

~~SECRET~~

2-19-2